

# THE UNDERSTANDING OF SELANGOR INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY COLLEGE STUDENTS ABOUT TABZIR VERSES IN THE AL-QURAN

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## ABSTRACT

*A wasteful and extravagant attitude in using properties is an act prohibited in Islam. There are several verses in the Quran prohibiting this wasteful and extravagant attitude. Verses about tabzir are sometimes not well understood by the public and students, such as those at the Selangor Islamic University College (KUIS) in Malaysia. It is undeniable that the level of understanding and practice of the tabzir verses can affect their daily life behavior. The objectives of this paper were to review tabzir meaning in the Al-Qur'an and to examine the level of understanding and practice on tabzir verses of Kolej Universiti Islam Antar Bangsa Selangor (KUIS) students. In addition, this study also aimed to closely examine the practical implications of the understanding and practice of the tabzir verses on student behavior in their lives.*

**Keywords:** Tabzir Verses, Understanding and Practice, Practical Implications.

## INTRODUCTION

Wealth is an essential human need that must be fulfilled every day. These needs include clothing, shelter, and food. These basic needs are an inseparable part of human life in general. In fact, in Islam, it is recognized that humans are creatures who have natural impulses, one of which is the desire to own property. These instincts and natures encourage people to make efforts for the welfare and development of life.

As a basic need, Islam includes property (al-mal) as one of the five elements that every individual must protect besides religion (al-din), soul (al-nafs), mind (al-aql), and offspring (al-nasl). These five elements become an important and in-depth concept in Islamic study.

This study specifically examined the understanding and practice of the Kolej Universiti Islam Antar Bangsa Selangor (KUIS) students on tabzir verses in the Qur'an. Field study data showed that several students in KUIS seem to behave extravagantly in their daily lives. KUIS is an educational institution under the Negeri Selangor Kingdom, which is located in Bandaraya Negeri Selangor. The KUIS student background varies, and the majority of students are residents of the nearest big cities.

The problems discussed above encouraged the authors to research tabzir. This study aimed to review the meaning of tabzir in the Al-Quran verses, examine the understanding and practice of Kolej Universiti Islam Antar Bangsa Selangor (KUIS) students on tabzir verses, and investigate the implications of the understanding and practice of the tabzir verses have on student behavior.

## The Prohibition of Being Tabzir in the Quran

The term tabzir has been absorbed into one of the standard terms in Indonesia called mubazir (wasteful spending), meaning too much or overspending and then wasted (Poerwadarminta, 1976). Terminologically, there are many definitions of tabzir according to scholars, for example, the explanation of Imam al-Syafil, as quoted by Hamid al-Bilali, stated that tabzir is using/spending property for something that is not right. Moreover, tabzir means spending wealth inappropriately on objects explicitly prohibited by the Shari'ah, such as liquor and other prohibited items (Ibrahim, 2015).

The Qur'an uses the term wasteful spending in terms of wealth in two forms, namely tabzir and israf. Abdul Baqi explained that the term tabzir in the Qur'an is mentioned three times and repeated only in one chapter; QS. Al-Isra verse 26 and 27. Meanwhile, israf is mentioned 23 times with different word forms and is also spread in 17 chapters. This paper examined the following five verses that are considered capable of representing the tabzir verses.

The Qur'an uses the term tabzir for acknowledgment of an act that is not good. Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, mentions that tabzir acts as one of the devil's actions. This concept was mentioned in the QS. Al-Isra verse 26-27, the translation is as follows:

And give the relative his right, and also the poor and the traveler, and do not spend wastefully. Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful (Surah Al-Isra verse 26-27).

As quoted by Sayyid Qutb, Ibn Masud, and Ibn Abbas interpret the meaning of tabzir in verse as to spend wealth for something that is not true. In the same source, Imam Mujahid mentions that if a person spends all his wealth on the truth, he is not a wasteful person. However, if he spends just one handful for unrighteousness, then he has been in futility. Sayyid Qutb commented on the opinion of these scholars that the standard of wastefulness in this context is not on the donation amount but the object of donation (Quthb, 2004).

Al-Syarawi explained that the act of tabzir and lavishness is a form of heart problem caused by being happy to spend the treasures from Allah and will be manifested in action. Likewise, Shihab's (2007) explanation, that Allah strictly forbids human from doing redundant or excessive actions. This behavior is an act of satan, and satan himself is one of the creatures who disobey Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted (Al-Syarawi, 2007).

The prohibition of tabzir and squandering and excessive use of wealth is also explained in the QS. Al-Araf verse 31, the translation is as follows:

O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, eat and drink, but are not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess (Chapter al-Araf verse 31).

According to Ibn Abbas, as quoted by al-Qurtubi, the verse justifies eating and drinking as long as it is not excessive. Food and drinks that suit your needs are those that can eliminate

hunger and thirst. Eating and drinking like this can keep the soul and senses healthy. Islam forbids eating and drinking in excess because it can weaken the body, kill the soul, and eliminate the spirit of worship (Al-Qurtubi, 1993).

Al-Tahlawi included QS. Al-Araf verse 31 is one of the verses that inform about the prohibition of excessive use of property, so that includes wasting wealth (Al-Tahlawi, 2007). As illustrated by the Qur'an, that the characteristic of a believer is a group of people who, when donating or spending their wealth, they are not miserly and not extravagant. The exaggeration known as extravagance and wasting money is not a characteristic of a believer (Munawar-Rachman, 2011).

The prohibition of tabzir in verse above can be inferred that tabzir is part of the nature and circumstances that can influence people to overspend their property. This outrageous act, apart from being normatively prohibited, also has implications on human life aspect. The wasteful nature of property leads to damage, not benefit, for example, a considerable loss of property and harming co-workers in a business. Thus, the prohibition of wastefulness (tabzir) in the Qur'an has a causal relationship with the reality of human life aspects.

Prohibition of wastefulness (tabzir) is closely related to law. In the context of Islamic law, the prohibition of extravagance in a Muslim life is part of Islam's efforts to create benefit or, in other terms, called Mashlahah. Maslahah means an act that encourages human goodness (Syarifuddin, 2011). Imam al-Ghazali, as quoted by Al Yasa Abubakar, mentions mashlahah as an expression that has the meaning of rejecting damage and taking advantage or benefit (Abubakar, 2016). Mashlahah is rejecting damage and taking advantage. Following this mashlahah theory, the act of wasting (tabzir) on the property will lead to damage. Therefore, tabzir must be prohibited in Islam through the Qur'an.

The prohibition of wastefulness in the Qur'an is also closely related to the economic aspect. Islam regulates appropriate ways to gain wealth and ways to spend and use properties. In the Islamic economy, ownership contracts, such as buying and selling and other muamalah aspects, must be carried out with the proper rules. The rules also emphasize avoiding acts of theft of other people's property, cheating and stealing, committing riba (usury), wasting or excessively spending of property, and damaging property (Sari, 2015). Even in Islamic economic law, the wasteful person is not given any property because it is believed that people do not deserve it even though it is their property (Shihab, 2001).

Islam rejects materialism, hedonism, and consumerism. This value is proven by prohibiting wastefulness (tabzir) and miserliness (Aravik, 2017). This indicates that the nature of wastefulness or consumerism is not justified in Islam because it becomes an obstacle to economic development. In fact, in Islamic muamalah, not being extravagant is one of the conditions for a person to be allowed to use wealth. According to Ghazaly and his friends, the condition for using the property is to live a humble life and not tabzir (Abdul Rahman Ghazaly et al., 2015).

Tabzir prohibition is also explained in QS. Al-Furqan verse 67, the translation is as follows:

And those who, when they spend (wealth), they are not excessive, and are not (also) miserly, and are (the spending) in the midst of such things (moderately) (Chapter Al-Furqan verse 67).

Imam al-Ghazali, as quoted by Toto Adidarmo & Mulyadi, stated that excessive and wasteful behavior in using wealth is a form of spiritual illness related to the consumption of food and drink, as well as clothing and shelter. In other words, he added that *tabzir* is part of the human spiritual state which not in peace and cannot be grateful for the blessings of Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, whether in the form of food, clothing, and other favors (Adidarmo, 2015).

Another verse relating to the waste of property (*Israf*), as explained in QS. Al-Anam verse 141, the translation is as follows:

And it is He Who produces gardens trellised and untrellised, and date palms, and crops of different shape and taste (its fruits and its seeds) and olives, and pomegranates, which are similar (shape and color) and different (in taste). Eat of their fruit when they ripen, but pay the due thereof (by giving alms to the poor); Verily, Allah does not like extravagant people (Chapter Al-Anam verse 141).

The verse above explains God's prohibition to use property excessively. Extravagance use of the wealth can be eating it or using it for other things. The meaning of *asraf* (*tusrifu*) in verse above is the prohibition of giving all property so that the donor becomes indigent. Al-Qurtubi explains that the prohibition in verse is aimed at people who take something without rights and spend it illegitimately. Al-Suddi adopted this meaning (Al-Qurtubi, 1993). Hence, donating all of the properties without leaving it for him is part of wasting wealth.

In the previous verse, the words *al-musrifin* and *tubazzir tabzira* in the previous verse have the same meaning that is an exaggeration and wasteful in spending wealth. This meaning is in line with Shidiq's statement that the verse above is about the prohibition of being wasteful (Shidiq, 2017). Content of the verse is the effort to prohibit people from committing wasteful and consumptive attitudes. Consumptive behavior and actions are identical to Satan's actions, which is ungrateful and deny the favor of Allah, glory to him, the exalted.

Based on the explanation of the verses above, it can be understood that the term *tabzir* is specifically used for the term extravagant, especially in the wastage of property. Meanwhile, the word *israf* means excessive goods or excessively using property and eating food. It can also be interpreted as a person who exceeds the limit. In addition, the term *israf* is more often referred to people who exceed the limit in spending their wealth.

According to several opinions above, it confirms that wasteful acts are prohibited in Islam. The scholars generally agree that it is forbidden to spend property wrongly and uselessly and not according to its rights. Therefore, all actions that have indications of a wasteful act must be eliminated as soon as possible.

The prohibition of being wasteful is an ideal theory that should be applied and practiced by society. It seems that the community does not correctly understand and implement the Quran prohibition on these wasteful actions. People at all levels and social statuses tend to adopt this *tabzir* behavior in their daily lives. Today, wasteful behavior is not only committed by commoners but also by people from higher social status and educational levels. This phenomenon happens probably because of lacking public understanding about the dangers of wasteful and lacking awareness in following Allah's prohibition on wastage.

## Selangor International Islamic University College Students' Understanding against Tabzir Verses

Students of The International Islamic University College Selangor Malaysia generally understand the tabzir or wasteful verses (excessive and inappropriate use of the property and is not as needed). This inappropriate behavior was acknowledged by several students and educators interviewed by the authors at the Selangor International Islamic University College. A better understanding of tabzir prohibition is caused by the fact that the tabzir verses are verses that are generally explained to the public, either through religious lectures or the parental guidance to avoid wastage of property, such as throwing away food and other things. This statement is in line with Salman bin Zainal Abidin, Director of the Center for Student Affairs at the International Islamic University College Selangor. He stated that generally, students at the university know the tabzir verses through religious classes, parental information, and lessons in high schools and even university (Abidin, 2020).

The deputy assistant for student affairs at the College of University admitted that most students already know about tabzir verses. The understanding of tabzir verses was introduced from an early age by parents to their children to avoid throwing away food, buying unnecessary things, and other prohibitions. All prohibitions are part of the parents' teaching and guidance as a manifestation of the tabzir verses. Thereby, she concluded that students at the Selangor Islamic International University College know the tabzir verses.

The truth of the statements of the two officials above was acknowledged. Students at the KUIS generally know the tabzir verses. At least, he underlined three points of tabzir verses: first, being excessive or extravagant is a devil's action, spending wealth on ways that do not benefit oneself and society, and following desire when shopping (buying unnecessary things).

Further explanation stated that in the Qur'an, there is a verse from Allah, glory to him, the exalted, which explains the prohibition of tabzir, which contains an explanation about excessive and wasteful use of wealth. This outrageous act is part of the devil's practice. Therefore, all Muslims are obliged not to be extravagant in spending their wealth or not spend it in the wrong way (Noh, 2020).

The explanations above can be inferred that students at The International Islamic University College Selangor generally know and understand the tabzir verses in the Qur'an. This understanding was learned from various circles, including parents and teachers during elementary, secondary schools, and even universities. These understandings can be detailed as follows:

1. The tabzir verses are verses that explain the waste in using properties;
2. The meaning of tabzir is to overspend property;
3. Tabzir also means using wealth on things that are not useful, or even on things that are immoral/impermissible;
4. The verse about tabzir shows that Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, forbids being extravagant. This verse is identical with the Word of Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, that wastefulness is one of the acts of Satan;

The extravagant behavior mentioned in verse about tabzir refers to the behavior and attitude that is not and has not been grateful for Allah's blessings. Interestingly, although students

at The International Islamic University College Selangor generally know and understand the meaning and provisions of the verses prohibiting tabzir, in reality, it was found that a small number of students were being extravagant in spending their wealth. This data, based on several students' information, including information from Norain Binti Mat Noh, FPPI students Tahfiz and Qiraat, revealed that a small percentage of students were still found to behave in a wasteful and extravagance manner. This attitude could be seen in buying food and throwing away the leftover. In addition, another manifestation of tabzir is wasting time by spending it on useless matters and not using it to deepen religious knowledge, memorize lessons, and other more valuable things.

The most often excessive behavior found on a small number of students is related to food. There was leftover food and contribute to food waste. This condition is certainly not appropriate and does not appreciate the blessings of Allah, glory to him, the exalted. In addition, wasteful behavior was found when students used tap water excessively for ablution or just for washing hands and feet. This situation is probably common among a small number of students at the University.

A similar statement was made by a Bachelor of Al-Quran and Qiraat at the Selangor International Islamic University College. A few students tend to be ignorant and did not obey the order of Allah glory to him, the exalted, in the Quran to avoid wasteful attitudes. The students also did not take the prohibition of tabzir as an essential matter. Consequently, they were often excessively spending on items that they do not need, such as throwing away the leftovers, using water inefficiently, and wasting time doing unnecessary activities or not using it to study. Attitudes and actions that do not respect the time and waste time are also certainly classified as tabzir actions and included in the prohibition of Allah, glory to him, the exalted.

Previous statements revealed a small group of students who are ignorant against the tabzir verses provisions among the Selangor Islamic University College students. However, generally, they know of tabzir prohibition in the Quran. These students did not follow the guidance of tabzir verses, which emerged wasteful attitudes and actions. Tabzir practice often committed by some students was wasting time and not using it for educational and religious purposes, buying food excessively than throwing away the leftover and overusing water.

These mistakes still exist among The International Islamic University College Selangor students now. Based on this information, it can be inferred that a small number of students at The International Islamic University College Selangor seem not to have understood and practiced the tabzir verses contained in the Quran. However, the number is relatively small compared to students who understand the tabzir verse and practice it daily.

Tabzir committed by some students contradicted with the tabzir verses in the Qur'an is prohibited in the religion of Islam. The perpetrators of this behavior are included as sinners because tabzir is part of heart illnesses. This view, in line with Al-Syarawi opinion, stated that tabzir is a form of heart problem caused by the habit of wasting treasures from Allah, Glory to him, the exalted (Al-Syarawi, 2007; Jajuli, 2018).

The Qur'an verses regarding tabzir tend not to be fully understood by all KUIS students, proven by two groups of students. The majority of the students who have understood the tabzir verses and a small number of students who have not understood the tabzir verses. Interestingly, the minority student understanding of the tabzir verses is limited to the prohibitions of wasting

food. While tabzir in other matters are not well understood, such as excessive water use, wasting time by not using it for learning purposes). Inadequate understanding of the minority student on tabzir verses leads to a lousy direction, practicing wasteful acts.

### **Implications of Understanding and Practicing Tabzir Verses on the Life Behavior of Kolej University Islam Antar Bangsa Selangor (KUIS) Students**

The implications of understanding and practicing the Tabzir verses on the life behavior of the KUIS students are generally divided into positive and negative behaviors. The implications can be seen through the following information.

The first statement was by Tengku Muhammad Afiq bin Tengku Abdul Halim, a Tahfiz al-Qur'an and Al-Qiraat Baccalaureate student at KUIS. He stated the impact of a deep understanding of tabzir verses on students is that they know that Allah, glory to him, the exalted, prohibit tabzir, which is excessively and wastefully spending properties on things that are not permissible and forbidden by Allah, glory to him, the Exalted. This knowledge and understanding automatically have an impact on student behavior. Students will grow a sense of affection for property.

A similar statement was made by Wan Mohd Fikri Wan Sani, Tahfiz Qiraat at KUIS, Malaysia. He explained that students whose understanding and practice against tabzir verses was correct would affect their attitudes. They tend to value properties more, such as feeling fulfilled for their daily needs, calm, and grateful for Allah's blessings upon them. In contrast to a small number of students who behave extravagantly, because they do not understand and do not practice the verses of tabzir, they will not be satisfied with what they have in daily life, do not have a peaceful heart and soul and are not grateful for the blessings of Allah, Glory to him, the exalted.

Further insight revealed by Izzat, Tahfiz Qiraat at KUIS pointed out that students who correctly understand the tabzir verses and practice them in daily life will affect their behavior. They tend to show better behavior and are not wasteful in the use of properties.

A Bachelor of Al-Quran and Qiraat at KUIS mentioned that students who understand well the tabzir verses and practice them in their daily lives would have positive impacts on their personal. These implications are as following; feeling fulfilled for daily needs, always being grateful for the blessings from Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, enjoying life humbly, remembering Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, as The favor Giver, emerging efforts to learn Qur'an verses related to tabzir, beneficially spending wealth, and avoiding evil desire. On the other hand, students who only have knowledge about tabzir verses but do not practice it in daily life will get negative impacts, such as; feeling burdened with daily needs, not being grateful for the blessings that Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, has given, forgetting The favor Giver (Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted), lack of efforts in reciting and understanding the tabzir verses, spending wealth into a useless path, tend to follow lust and finally love the luxury so much.

In addition, based on the author's observations, several students excessively spend money on goods, food, daily needs. They even bought another piece of items that they already had and did not use up. These attitudes are indeed part of the inappropriate use of wealth and properties, which indicates that the understanding and practice of the tabzir verses among observed students

are still relatively lacking. Moreover, this misbehavior also can be noted from the documentation of the lecturers regarding undisciplined student behavior such as; excessive use of water, wasting time, or not being able to take advantage of the time to study.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that student understanding on tabzir verses will have implications for students themselves. Those who understand and practice the prohibition of wastefulness as informed in the Quran will have better living conditions and feel grateful. On the other hand, the student who does not understand well the tabzir verses will have a negative impact. Meanwhile, the prohibition of excessive use of the property has been very clearly stated in the tabzir verses in the previous sections.

In summary, there are negative and positive impacts found on KUIS students related to the understanding and practice of tabzir verses. Students who understand and at the same time practice the tabzir verses appropriately will naturally get positive impacts on their lives. In contrast, students who understand but do not practice the tabzir verses correctly will negatively affect their lives.

## CONCLUSION

In general, tabzir verses in the Qur'an explain that Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, prohibits Muslims from squandering wealth, energy, and thoughts in a way that is not permitted by Allah, in everyday life. The use of wealth, energy, and thoughts that are not beneficial is included in the devil's actions that need to be avoided. KUIS Students generally understand the tabzir verses in the Qu'ran even though a few of them did not. This understanding was obtained from the teaching of various circles, including parents and teachers in Elementary Schools, High Schools, and even Universities. Students' understanding of the tabzir verses can be elaborated into five important points; The tabzir verses talk about wastefulness in terms of wealth, energy, and thoughts; The meaning of tabzir is waste and exaggeration in using wealth, energy and thoughts; Tabzir means to spend wealth, energy and mind on useless things, even on immoral things; The tabzir verses show that Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, forbids being extravagant. This prohibition can be seen from the Word of Allah, Glory to Him, the Exalted, that wasteful is one of the devil's actions. Lastly, wasteful behavior, as mentioned in the tabzir verses, leads to ungratefulness for Allah's blessings. The implications of understanding the tabzīr verses on the behavior of KUIS students depend on the presence or absence of the practice of these tabzir verses. Students who correctly understand the tabzir verses and practice them in daily life will positively impact their life behavior. On the other hand, students who only know or understand tabzir verses without practicing them will affect their life behavior negatively.

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